Newspaper Review of *Il-Filosofija tal-Moħħ*

by Anton Sammut

Originally published in *Il-Mument*, Sunday, 31 January 2016 (p. 42)

Reviewed by the editors

This document includes:

A scanned copy of the original article (from *Il-Mument*, p. 42)

A full Maltese transcription

An English translation adapted for clarity and citation

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Ktieb dwar ir-rabta bejn il-filosofija u l-moħħ

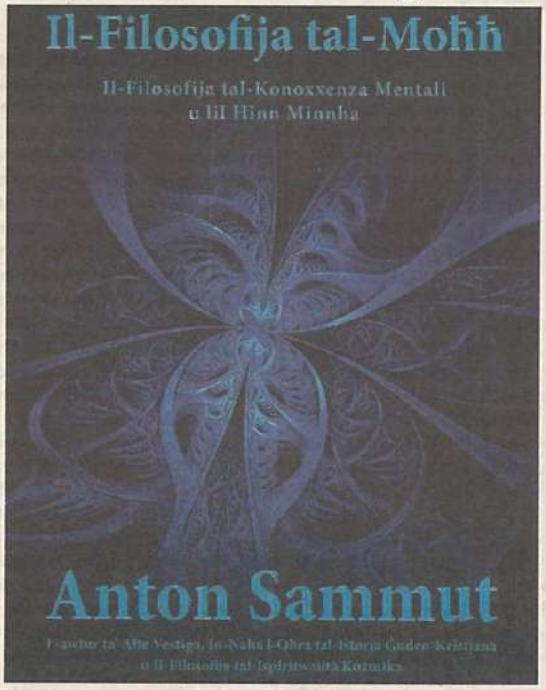
Il-moħħ uman: l-aktar strument sofistikat li jeżisti fl-univers magħruf, li fost oħrajn jikkonsisti f'aktar minn mitt biljun newronu ekwivalenti daqskemm jeżistu stilel fil-galassja tagħna l-Milky Way. Dan il-moħħ huwa wkoll dak li minnu toħroġ dik li aħna nsejjħulha bħala l-menti jew il-Konoxxenza tal-esseri uman.

Imma fil-verità, x'inhi dil-menti umana li taf tohloq tant meravilji frott il-Konoxxenza tagħha stess? X'inhi l-Konoxxenza nnifisha, dik li ħabbtet tant filosfi kbar matul iż-żminijiet?

Huwa proprju fuq dan is-suġġett affaxxinanti li jelabora f'dan il-ktieb il-ġdid tiegħu l-awtur u l-hassieb Anton Sammut.

Fost oħrajn, l-awtur jgħidilna li b'mod ġenerali, il-Konoxxenza tal-bniedem hija riżultat ta' mekkaniżmi konxji u subkonxji fis-sistema kumplessa tal-moħħ, li minnhom, eventwalment jiġi ffurmat ħsieb. Il-Konoxxenza tinvolvi għalhekk għarfien, esperjenzi, ħolm, intwizzjonijiet, sens tal-Jien, emozzjonijiet, memorji, kif ukoll viżjoni ta' dinja personalizzata li permezz tagħha nibnu l-ħajja personali tagħna lkoll.

Madankollu, il-ħajja m'hijiex daqshekk faċli, ikompli jgħidilna Sammut, u huwa proprju ħawnhekk li l-awtur jinżel fil-fond biex janalizza xi whud mill-akbar problemi li jgħaddi minnhom kull esseri uman. Pereżempju. Għaliex ħafna nies



Il-qoxra ta' quddiem tal-ktieb 'Il-Filosofija tal-Moħħ' (2015)

iħossuhom bħal donnhom jinsabu fuq ġżira eżistenzjali li fiha ma jkunu jistgħu jirrelataw ma' ħadd, huma u jsostnu li ħadd ma jista' jifhimhom u jagħrafhom fil-ħsieb u fil-qalb? X'jagħmel minna aħna nfusna, u mhux l-oħrajn? X'inhi l-fortuna u l-isfortuna, u għaliex dawn iż-żewġ fatturi huma illużivi u relattivi minn dan l-aspett? X'inhi l-Intwizzjoni, li permezz tagħha saru skoperti kbar f'kull era u żmien, u għaliex l-Intwizzjoni tmur lil hinn mill-illużjonijiet ta' madwarna li fuqhom tibbaża r-raġuni u l-intellett uman? Xi rwol għandu l-ħolm fl-iżvilupp tal-psike uman minn dan l-aspett?

Wara li jelabora fuq dawn it-temi mbagħad Sammut idur fuq il-livelli mentali varji li jidħlu fl-istess skala tal-Konoxxenza tal-esseri uman, li jibdew minn dak l-aktar komuni, avvanzat, traxxendentali, u dak illuminattiv. Minn dan l-aspett, fost oħrajn, l-awtur janalizza l-għaliex pereżempju bniedem partikolari jkollu natural ta' kriminal, jekk issibu b'natural kwiet, oħrajn ikunu ġenjali jew qaddisin, waqt li oħrajn issib li jkollhom livell illuminattiv tal-ogħla grad, fejn ħawnhekk ikompli jelabora għaliex bniedem jitwieled taħt ċertu kundizzjonijiet u mhux oħrajn. Aspett oriġinali ieħor li nsibu f'din it-taqsima hu l-istudju profond li Sammut wettaq fuq il-kunċett tal-Übermensch li l-filosfu Ġermaniż Friedrich Nietzsche huwa tant magħruf għalih, u allura wkoll fejn jintlaħaq dan il-livell mentali rari fl-istess skala tal-Konoxxenza tal-esseri uman.

Mistoqsijiet oħra li janalizza l-awtur f'dan il-ktieb huma x'jagħmel minn persuna bniedem għaref, u fuq kollox x'inhu l-għerf. X'sigrieti jeżistu wara l-forza tal-volontà u għaliex permezz ta' dil-forza l-bniedem jista' jsir dak li jixtieq ikun? Veru li l-Konoxxenza ta' kull bniedem ma tista' tispiċċa qatt? U fuq kollox, għaliex l-aqwa mħuh fil-fiżika moderna jgħidulna li l-Konoxxenza tagħmel parti wkoll mill-univers?

„Dawn huma xi whud mill-mistoqsijiet li Sammut jipprova jirrispondihom anki b'daqqa t'id tax-xjenza li għandna llum, li permezz tagħha se tkompli tgħin lill-qarrej jifhem aħjar wieħed mill-akbar misteri tal-bniedem: il-Konoxxenza mentali tiegħu stess.

Kif wieħed jista' jimmaġina, dan huwa ktieb li ċbda qarrej li għandu interess f'dan is-suġġett m'għandu jitlef; ktieb ta' studju u riċerka kbira li madankollu l-awtur ippreżentah b'mod ferm mexxej. Prof. Mario Valentino, BSc, M.Phil, PhD, mid-Dipartiment tal-Fiżjoloġija u Bijokemistrija fil-Fakultà tal-Mediċina u l-Kirurġija fl-Università ta' Malta, ikkummenta hekk fuq dan il-ktieb ta' Sammut:

"Consciousness, 'the ultimate mystery for science', has now become a hot topic. How can a physical brain create our experience of the World and what creates our identity? These are but some of the questions that author Anton Sammut tackles amidst the striking developments that have taken place in neuroscience, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence and notes their expanding relevance to philosophical issues.

The Philosophy of Mind brings neuroscientific evidence to bear on enduring philosophical questions, while also surveying philosophical and scientific theories of consciousness through current understanding from an evidence-based perspective. This book will be essential for anyone interested in the problems of consciousness, mind and reality."

Għal aktar informazzjoni fuq il-kotba ta' Anton Sammut wieħed jista' jżur is-sit tal-awtur fuq www.antonsammut.com

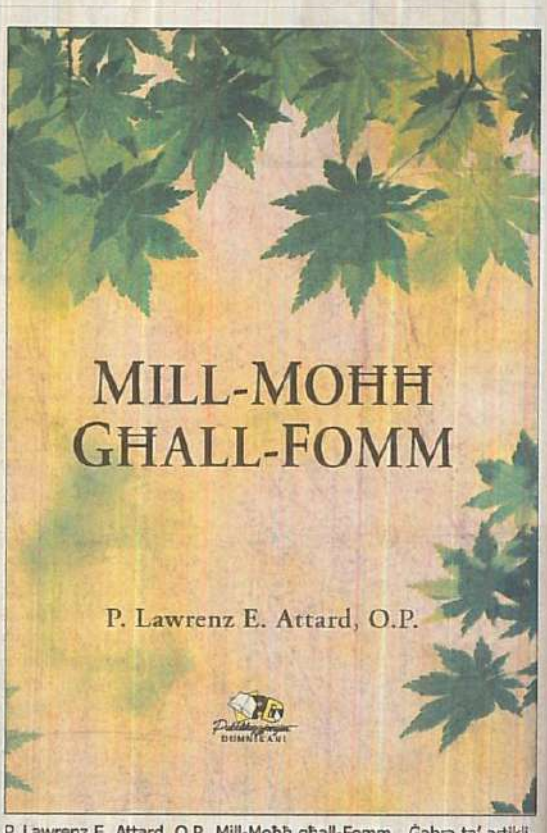
Ktieb li jagħġen il-formazzjoni intelletwali u l-esperjenza tal-ħajja

P. Lawrenz jippreżenta din il-ħidma bħala ġabra ta' ħsibijiet lill-qarrejja tiegħu. L-awtur igawdi minn żewġ vantaġġi siewja: formazzjoni intelletwali terzjarja minn universitajiet magħrufa u esperjenza twila li matulha applika dak li tgħallem għal-bżonnijiet ta' dawk li ġew f'kuntatt miegħu. Għalhekk ġie mħajjar biex jaqsam il-ħidma tiegħu ma' numru konsiderevoli ta' ħbieb bis-saħħa tal-kitba. Hija x-xewqa ta' P. Lawrenz li kif għamel għal żmien twil issa jkompli bil-ħidma tiegħu fil-formazzjoni kemm ta' studenti kif ukoll ta' adulti. Dan joħroġ ċar mit-titolu ta' dan il-ktieb: l-awtur jaħseb u jirrifletti dwar diversi kunċetti biex wara joffri l-ħsibijiet tiegħu lill-oħrajn. Fi kliem ieħor f'dan il-ktieb hawn ġabra ta' dak li interessa lill-awtur matul il-ħajja akkademika tiegħu u li huwa jixtieq li jaqsam ma' min huwa interessat fl-iżvilupp intelletwali ta' min jixtieq iwessa' l-ideat tiegħu dwar dak kollu li hemm madwarna. Hekk jikteb l-awtur fl-introduzzjoni tal-ktieb tiegħu.

Dan il-proġett jiġbor fih tliet taqsimiet: Valuri Siewja; Movimenti Migratorji Maltin; Ġrajjiet il-Bniedem. L-ewwel parti hija ta' karattru soċjo-reliġjuż, jiġifieri l-karattru Kattoliku kif inhu espress kemm mill-komunità internazzjonali kif ukoll kif wieħed isibu fl-ambjent Malti. It-tieni taqsima hija dwar il-fenomenu tal-migrazzjonijiet ta' popli shah, b'referenza partikolari għar-raġunijiet li wasslu lill-eluf ta' Maltin imorru jfittxu ħobżhom 'l hemm minn xtut ta' art twelidhom. Hawn jinħass sew l-interess partikulari tal-awtur li studja għal bosta snin is-suġġett tal-emigrazzjoni tal-Maltin, ħadem fost l-emigranti tagħna f'bosta pajjiżi tad-dinja u b'ħekk kiteb aktar minn sitt kotba dwar l-istorja tal-emigrazzjoni minn pajjiżna. Minħabba f'ħekk P. Lawrenz huwa meqjus bħala pijunier fl-istudju tal-emigrazzjoni minn artna.

L-aħħar taqsima ta' dan il-ktieb fiha firxa aktar wiesa' għax fiha kummenti dwar dak li jolqot lill-poplu tagħna fil-kuntest kemm Malti kif ukoll dak barrani. P. Lawrenz jasal għall-konklużjoni billi joffri l-opinjonijiet tiegħu dwar punti storiċi li jimirħu ferm 'l boghod mix-xtut tal-għejjer tagħna. Nota karatteristika ta' dan il-ktieb hija l-ħila tal-awtur fil-mod kif jikteb. Għandu stil mexxej u faċli li jżomm lill-qarrej imwaħħal mal-paġni ta' dan il-ktieb. Dan jgħodd kemm għall-kitba bil-Malti kif ukoll għal dik bl-Ingliż. Kiteb b'dawn iż-żewġ lingwi magħrufa sew minna l-Maltin biex iħares l-ispirtu ta' kif kien kiteb oriġinalment. P. Lawrenz qatt ma jinsa x'kiteb fil-bidu tal-ktieb tiegħu., "dan il-ktieb huwa mezz ta' komunikazzjoni bejn min jikteb u min jaqra".

Din il-kontribuzzjoni hija parti mit-tifkira li d-Dumnikani Maltin qed jagħmlu matul is-sena 2016 meta qed ifakkru t-800 sena l-konferma tal-Ordni tal-Predikaturi mill-Papa Onorju III fl-1216.



P. Lawrenz E. Attard, O.P., Mill-Moħħ għall-Fomm. Ġabra ta' artikli, taħdidiet, studji, konferenzi u riċerki li saru matul l-attività akkademika tal-awtur.

This document is a verbatim transcription of a Maltese-language newspaper article reviewing the book **Il-Filosofija tal-Moħħ** *(2015) by Anton Sammut. The article discusses the relationship between philosophy and the human mind and was originally published in* **Il-Mument** *on Sunday, 31 January 2016 (Books Section, p. 42).*

Ktieb dwar ir-rabta bejn il-filosofija u l-moħħ

A review of Anton Sammut's ***Il-Filosofija tal-Moħħ*** (2015)

Originally published in ***Il-Mument***, Sunday, 31 January 2016 (Books Section, p. 42)[1]
ISBN: 978-99957-0-865-8

Il-moħħ uman, l-aktar strument sofistikat li jeżisti fl-univers magħruf, li fost oħrajn jikkonsisti f'aktar minn 100 biljun newronu ekwivalenti daqskemm jeżistu stilel fil-galassja tagħna l-Milky Way. Dan il-moħħ huwa wkoll dak li minnu toħroġ dik li aħna nsejħulha bħala l-menti jew il-consciousness tal-esseri uman.

Imma fil-verità, x'inhi dil-menti umana li taħt toħloq tant meravilji frott il-consciousness tagħha stess? X'inhi l-consciousness innifisha, dik li ħabbtet tant filosfi kbar matul iż-żminijiet? Huwa proprju fuq dan is-suġġett affaxxinanti li jelabora f'dan il-ktieb il-ġdid tiegħu l-awtur u ħassieb Anton Sammut.

Fost oħrajn, l-awtur jgħidilna li b'mod ġenerali, il-consciousness primarja tal-bniedem hija riżultat ta' mekkaniżmi konxji u subkonxji fis-sistema kumplessa tal-moħħ li minnhom eventwalment jiġi ffurmat ħsieb. Il-consciousness primarja tinvolvi għalhekk għarfien, esperjenzi, ħolm, intwizzjonijiet, sens tal-Jien, emozzjonijiet, memorji, kif ukoll viżjoni ta' dinja personalizzata li permezz tagħha nibnu l-ħajja personali tagħna lkoll.

Madankollu, il-ħajja mhijiex daqshekk faċli, ikompli jgħidilna Sammut, u huwa proprju hawnhekk li l-awtur jinżel fil-fond biex janalizza xi wħud mill-akbar problemi li jgħaddi minnhom kull esseri uman. Pereżempju. Għaliex ħafna nies iħossuhom bħal donnhom jinsabu fuq gżira eżistenzjali li fiha ma jkunu jistgħu jirrelataw ma' ħadd, huma u jsostnu li ħadd ma jista' jifhimhom u jagħrafhom fil-ħsieb u fil-qalb? X'jagħmel minnha aħna nfusna u mhux

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Aspett oriġinali ieħor li nsibu f'din it-taqsima hu l-istudju profond li Sammut wettaq fuq il-kunċett tal-Übermensch li l-filosfu Ġermaniż Friedrich Nietzsche huwa tant magħruf għalih, u allura wkoll fejn jintlaħaq dan il-livell mentali rari fl-istess skala tal-consciousness tal-esseri uman.

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Dawn huma xi wħud mill-mistoqsijiet li dan il-ktieb jipprova jwieġeb bl-għajnuna anki tax-xjenza kontemporanja, li se tgħin biex nifhmu waħda mill-akbar misteri tal-bniedem: il-Consciousness tal-bniedem.

Kif wieħed jista' jimmaġina, dan hu ktieb li ebda qarrej b'interess f'dan is-suġġett m'għandu jħalli jgħaddi minn taħt għajnejh. Hu ktieb ta' studju u riċerka estensiva, li madankollu l-awtur jirnexxilu jippreżenta b'mod ċar u mexxej ħafna.

Il-Professur Mario Valentino, BSc, M.Phil., PhD, mid-Departiment tal-Fiżjoloġija u l-Bijokimika fil-Fakultà tal-Mediċina u l-kirurġija fl-Università ta' Malta, ikkummenta hekk dwar dan il-ktieb ta' Sammut.

"Consciousness, 'the ultimate mystery for science', has now become a hot topic. How can a physical brain create our experience of the World and what creates our identity?

These are but some of the questions that author Anton Sammut tackles amidst the striking developments that have taken place in neuroscience, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence and notes their expanding relevance to philosophical issues. Exciting new developments in brain science are opening up debates on these issues, and the field has now expanded to include biologists, neuroscientists, psychologists, and philosophers.

'*Consciousness: the Concept of Mind and the Transcendence of Conventional Thought'* brings neuroscientific evidence to bear on enduring philosophical questions, while also surveying philosophical and scientific theories of Consciousness through current understanding from an evidence-based perspective.

This book will be essential for anyone interested in the problems of Consciousness, mind and reality."[2]

Note: *This is a verbatim transcription of the original Maltese newspaper article published in* **Il-Mument** *on 31 January 2016 (p. 42). The article discusses Anton Sammut's book* **Il-Filosofija tal-Moħħ**. *The layout and formatting have been adapted for ease of reading, while preserving all original content and interpretations.*

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[1] *Il-Mument*. 31 January 2016. *"Ktieb dwar ir-rabta bejn il-filosofija u l-moħħ."* Books Section, p. 42. Review of *Il-Filosofija tal-Moħħ* (2015), ISBN 978-99957-0-865-8.

[2] Professor Mario Valentino stated that Sammut's book "brings neuroscientific evidence to bear on enduring philosophical questions."<ref>"Anton Sammut: Consciousness – The Philosophy of Mind", Il-Mument, 31 January 2016, p. 42.</ref>

This document reproduces in full the English translation of a Maltese-language newspaper article reviewing the philosophical work **Il-Filosofija tal-Moħħ** *(2015) by Anton Sammut. The article explores Sammut's treatment of human consciousness and the philosophy of mind and was originally published in* **Il-Mument** *on Sunday, 31 January 2016 (Books Section, p. 42).*

A Review of Il-Filosofija tal-Moħħ (2015) by Anton Sammut

"A book about the relationship between philosophy and the mind."

Originally published in **Il-Mument**, Sunday, 31 January 2016 (Books Section, p. 42)[1]
ISBN: 978-99957-0-865-8

The human mind is the most sophisticated instrument known to exist in the universe. It consists of more than 100 billion neurons — roughly as many as the stars in our Milky Way galaxy. From this mind arises what we refer to as the "mind" or the consciousness of the human being.

But what truly is this human mind, capable of producing such marvels through its own consciousness? What is consciousness itself — that elusive phenomenon that has puzzled so many great philosophers throughout history? It is precisely this fascinating subject that author and thinker Anton Sammut elaborates upon in his new book.

Among other insights, Sammut explains that, generally speaking, human primary consciousness is the product of both conscious and subconscious mechanisms within the brain's complex system — mechanisms from which thought eventually emerges. Primary consciousness therefore involves awareness, experiences, dreams, intuitions, the sense of self, emotions, memories, and a personalised worldview through which we each construct our personal lives.

However, life is not so simple, Sammut continues. It is at this point that he delves deeply into some of the greatest existential struggles faced by every human being. For instance: Why do so many people feel as though they are stranded on an existential island, unable to relate to anyone, insisting that no one can truly understand their mind or heart? What makes us "ourselves" and not someone else? What are fortune and misfortune, and why are these two states so often illusory and relative? What is intuition — that mysterious capacity through

which major discoveries have been made across all eras — and why does intuition surpass the illusions around us, illusions on which reason and human intellect are often based? What role does dreaming play in the development of the human psyche?

After exploring these themes, Sammut turns to the various mental levels found along the spectrum of human consciousness, from the common and advanced, to the transcendental and illuminative. Here, the author analyses, among other things, why some individuals are born with criminal tendencies, others are peaceful by nature, some are geniuses or saints, and still others possess an extraordinarily heightened level of consciousness. He continues by examining why people are born under certain conditions and not others.

Another original aspect of this section is Sammut's profound study of the Übermensch concept — the "Superman" — made famous by German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Sammut explores how this rare mental state fits within the broader spectrum of human consciousness.

Other questions the author tackles include: What makes someone truly wise, and what is wisdom itself? What hidden forces lie behind the power of will, and why does this force allow a person to become what they desire to be? Is it true that human consciousness can never truly be extinguished? And perhaps most significantly: Why do some of the greatest minds in modern physics now assert that consciousness itself is a fundamental part of the universe?

These are just some of the questions this book attempts to address — supported by the insights of contemporary science, which assists the reader in grappling with one of the greatest mysteries of all: the consciousness of the human being.

The review concludes that *Il-Filosofija tal-Moħħ* is a book no reader with interest in this subject should miss — a study grounded in extensive research, yet presented by the author in an engaging and accessible manner.

Professor Mario Valentino, BSc, M.Phil., PhD, from the Department of Physiology & Biochemistry at the University of Malta's Faculty of Medicine & Surgery, commented on Sammut's work as follows:

"Consciousness, 'the ultimate mystery for science', has now become a hot topic. How can a physical brain create our experience of the World and what creates our identity?

These are but some of the questions that author Anton Sammut tackles amidst the striking developments that have taken place in neuroscience, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence and notes their expanding relevance to philosophical issues. Exciting new developments in brain science are opening up debates on these issues, and the field has now expanded to include biologists, neuroscientists, psychologists, and philosophers.

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